

Inspection of a good school: Brunswick School

Brunswick Road, Penrith, Cumbria CA11 7LX

Inspection dates:

23 March 2023

Outcome

Brunswick School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy a warm and happy environment, where everyone at the school is valued. They thrive on the positive and nurturing relationships they have with staff. Pupils are well mannered. This is reflected in the warm welcome that pupils give to visitors and to new pupils that join school.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), respond well to the high expectations that leaders have of their behaviour and achievement. Pupils comment that they feel confident to speak to staff if they have any concerns. If bullying takes place, leaders take swift action to ensure that it is addressed effectively. This helps pupils to feel safe.

Pupils relish the opportunities they have to develop their interests and talents. They enjoy gardening, tasting new foods at the food lab and taking part in a wide range of sporting activities. Teachers encourage pupils to develop a sense of responsibility through the many jobs at the school that pupils take on. Pupils enjoy learning about local history during visits to Penrith and Eden Museum and Carlisle Castle.

Parents are very supportive of the school. They appreciate the caring environment that leaders have created, which helps pupils, including children in the early years, to flourish.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders are driven by high aspirations for all pupils and an inclusive vision that pervades all aspects of the school. Following the outcomes for 2022, leaders have taken swift and effective action to support pupils to achieve well. In most subject areas, leaders have taken decisive steps to embed an ambitious suite of curriculums that are helping the current pupils to achieve well. This is particularly so in phonics and mathematics.

In the early years, children benefit from the well-designed curriculum that leaders have created. Adults in the early years prioritise the development of children's communication and language skills so that they are well prepared for the demands of Year 1.

In a minority of curriculum areas, subject leaders have not finalised their curriculum thinking. In these subjects, teachers are not as clear as they should be about the key knowledge that they should teach. Consequently, at times, the activities that teachers design do not help some pupils to develop the depth of knowledge that they should.

Teachers use their subject knowledge well to accurately identify and address any misconceptions that pupils may have about their learning. This helps most pupils to gain the knowledge and understanding they need so that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Leaders identify effectively any additional needs that pupils may have, including for those pupils with SEND. They ensure that teachers use this information successfully to design activities that enable these pupils to access the curriculum alongside their classmates. Leaders draw on the expertise of other agencies, when necessary, to ensure that pupils receive any additional help they need so that they can achieve well.

Leaders have prioritised reading across the school. Staff receive the training they need to deliver the phonics curriculum effectively. Less confident readers, and those at the early stages of learning to read, are well supported to catch up quickly with their phonic knowledge.

Leaders have ensured that the books pupils read match the sounds they have learned. This helps pupils to become confident, fluent readers. Pupils cherish the books that leaders have made available to them. These books help pupils to develop an understanding of good friendships and the different types of families and cultures that exist in society.

Pupils behave well in lessons. Teachers emphasise the importance of each pupils' resilience rucksack. This helps pupils to develop determination, independence and a positive attitude to their learning. As a result, low-level disruption is rare, and teachers deal effectively with any incidents that may occur. There is a small number of pupils that do not attend school as regularly as they should. These pupils miss out on important learning.

Leaders ensure that pupils have access to a broad range of experiences that make a strong contribution to their personal development. Pupils understand the importance of a healthy diet and being physically active. They have an age-appropriate understanding of what makes a healthy relationship. Pupils respect different faiths and cultures.

Governors know the school well. They successfully hold leaders to account for the quality of education at the school. Staff feel valued, and they appreciate the support that they receive from leaders so that they can carry out their roles effectively. Staff are proud to work at this school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong safeguarding culture at the school. Staff receive the training they need to help them identify pupils who may be at risk of harm. Leaders respond quickly to any concerns that staff raise to ensure that pupils and families receive the support they need. Leaders work effectively with other agencies when necessary.

Pupils learn about how to stay safe online and in the community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not finalised their curriculum thinking. This means that teachers are not as clear as they should be about the key knowledge they should emphasise. Additionally, at times, the activities that teachers design do not allow pupils to develop the necessary depth of knowledge. In this small number of subjects, leaders should ensure that curriculum leaders receive the support they need to finalise their thinking so that pupils benefit from suitably ambitious curriculums.
- Some pupils do not attend school as regularly as they should. These pupils miss out on important learning, and some develop gaps in their knowledge and understanding. Leaders should ensure that they support these pupils to improve their rates of attendance.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually, this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2018.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	112117
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10268796
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	156
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chairs of governing body	Jackie Bennett Jan Osborne
Headteacher	Samantha Waugh
Website	www.brunswick.cumbria.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 and 17 January 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection that the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and history. The inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, reviewed pupils' work and spoke with staff and pupils.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders.
- The inspectors held meetings with the school adviser and with members of the local governing body, including the co-chairs of governors.
- The inspectors met with leaders to discuss reading, SEND, the curriculum, pupils'

behaviour and attendance and the provision for pupils' wider development.

- The inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's parent questionnaire, Parent View, including the free-text comments. They took account of the responses from staff and pupils to Ofsted's online surveys and gathered the views of staff and pupils throughout the inspection.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspectors met with leaders, staff and pupils. They checked a sample of leaders' safeguarding records and reviewed the recruitment checks made on staff.
- The inspectors spoke with pupils about their experiences of school life and their views of behaviour and bullying. The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- The inspectors spoke to staff about their workload and well-being.

Inspection team

Andy Cunningham, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Joe Dryland

Ofsted Inspector

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